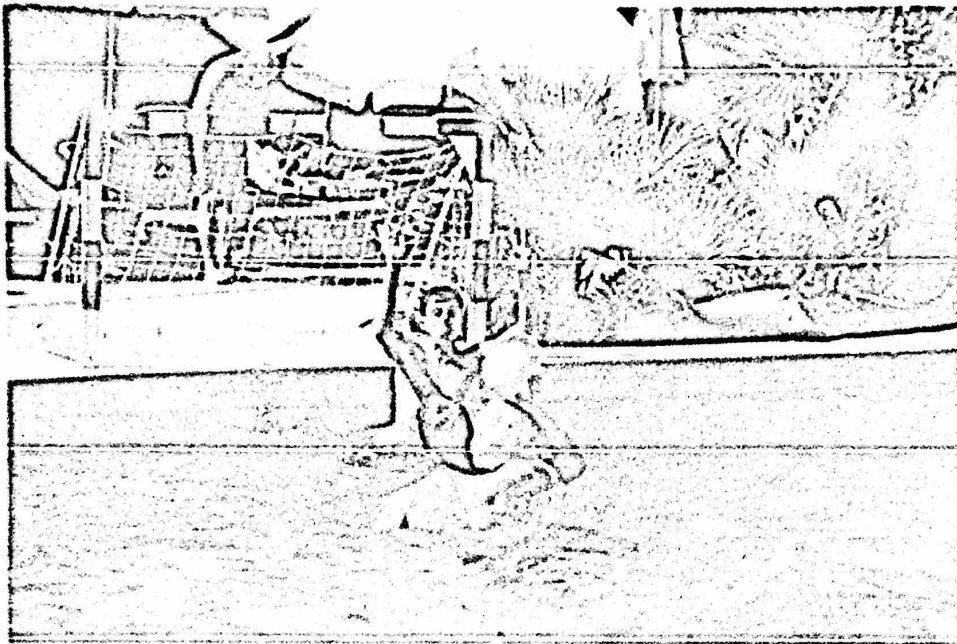


The Pool

by Gabrielle Sierra



Alex and Karen were sitting in their backyard on a hot summer day. All they wanted to do was go swimming, but the local public pool was under construction, and all of the adults were too busy to give them a ride to the beach.

"I just want to sit in the cool water," said Alex, imagining how nice it would feel.

The two sat quietly as they thought about how else they could cool off.

"Let's blow up that kiddie pool that we have in the garage," suggested Karen. "We can fill that with water, and it will help us cool off."

The two ran to the garage and found the inflatable pool stuck in a box. They dragged it out to the lawn and looked at it.

"It needs to be blown up," said Karen.

Alex sat down and started blowing air into the pool through the nozzle, but after a while he realized it wasn't doing very much. He was exhausted and out of breath from all the blowing. The pool was too big for just one person to inflate, and at this rate it would take Alex all night.

He sat back, defeated. "Okay, so how are we going to get it inflated then?"

Karen thought it over. Alex went back to the garage and got a bicycle pump, but the ends didn't match up. Then Alex came back with an old vacuum, but that sucked air instead of pumping it.

Karen thought and thought, and eventually she realized something.

"Did we check the pool box and see if there is a pump at the bottom?" she asked.

They ran into the garage and tipped the box over. Out fell a pump. They laughed.

"That was a very good idea," said Alex, as they went back to the yard and connected the pump to the pool. "We were so excited to find the pool that we didn't gather all of the pieces first."

Finally the pool was blown up. But as Karen and Alex looked at it they realized that it was slowly deflating.

"There must be a hole somewhere," said Karen. "We'll have to find it."

They each took a side and examined the pool, but couldn't find anything.

"The hole may be too small to see," said Alex. "How can we find it if it is too small to see?"

"Maybe we can feel it," suggested Karen.

She traced her finger along the pool, only to find that she couldn't feel anything.

"I know," said Alex, "let's listen and maybe we will hear the air escaping."

They placed their ears next to the pool and listened. Sure enough, Karen heard a soft sound as air escaped through a hole.

"I found it!" she said. "That was a good idea. The hole was too small to see, but we could hear it. Now we have to patch it."

Alex ran into the house and grabbed a bunch of different things to try and patch the pool. First he suggested glue, but that didn't seem to make sense to Karen. It would have to dry, and they wouldn't be able to swim until it did. Then he suggested a Band-Aid, but that wouldn't stick around the hole. Last he pulled out a roll of gray, heavy-duty tape.

"That should do it," said Karen, cutting a piece and placing it over the hole.

They refilled the pool with air, and this time it stayed full.

"Now we have to fill the pool," said Alex.

But how would they get the water into the pool? Karen suggested filling buckets up from the kitchen and carrying them outside. At first this seemed to work but they soon realized that it would take them forever to fill up the pool. Then Alex suggested filling it from the spout in the backyard.

"That makes a lot more sense," said Karen. "Let's drag it over to the spout."

They did, and Alex turned on the water. The pool was soon full.

Alex and Karen went inside and put their bathing suits on. Then they ran back outside and sat in the pool.

"Well, we can't swim, but at least we found a way to stay cool," said Alex. "And we worked together."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the first thing that needs to be done with the kiddie pool after it is taken out to the lawn?

- A. The kiddie pool needs to be filled with water.
- B. The kiddie pool needs to be filled with air.
- C. The kiddie pool needs to be deflated.
- D. The kiddie pool needs to be dragged over to the spout in the backyard.

2. Alex and Karen want to cool off, but the local public pool is under construction, and no adult has time to give them a ride to the beach. How do they solve their problem?

- A. They put on their bathing suits and sit in the garage.
- B. They fill up buckets with water in the kitchen.
- C. They imagine how nice the cool water would feel.
- D. They use the kiddie pool from their garage.

3. Getting the kiddie pool ready takes a lot of work.

What evidence from the story supports this statement?

- A. Alex and Karen have to figure out how to fill the pool with air, how to patch a leak in the pool, and how to get water into the pool.
- B. Alex and Karen want to go swimming, but the local public pool is under construction, and the adults they know are too busy to take them to the beach.
- C. Alex and Karen go inside to put their bathing suits on and then run back outside to sit in the kiddie pool.
- D. Alex imagines how nice it would feel to sit in cool water before he and Karen decide to blow up the kiddie pool being kept in their garage.

4. How can Alex and Karen be described?

- A. Alex and Karen are people who do not like getting wet.
- B. Alex and Karen are people who often get bored.
- C. Alex and Karen are people who do not care about finishing what they start.
- D. Alex and Karen are people who do not give up easily.

5. What is a theme of this story?

- A. If you want something that you cannot have, it is best to stop thinking about it.
- B. If you want to solve a problem, it is important to try different things and not give up.
- C. If you want to cool off on a hot summer day, you should find someone to take you to the beach.
- D. If you want to get along with other people, you should never listen to their ideas.

6. Read the following sentence: "He was exhausted and out of breath from all the blowing. The pool was too big for just one person to **inflate**, and at this rate it would take Alex all night."

What does **inflate** mean in the sentence above?

- A. break into pieces
- B. hide under the ground
- C. fill with air
- D. pour water on

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Karen and Alex have problems getting the kiddie pool ready, _____ they solve all of them.

- A. for example
- B. previously
- C. instead
- D. but

8. What are the first three ways that Alex tries to fill the pool with air?

9. How do Karen and Alex finally fill the pool with air?

10. Are Karen and Alex good at solving problems? Explain why or why not, using evidence from the story.
